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for John Murphy
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SCHOOL LIBRARY SYSTEMS

History

School Library System Pilot Projects were first authorized by Chapter 787 of the Laws of 1978 in December 1978. There were to be two types of projects - regional multi-type library systems and independent school library systems. The school library systems were to be based on BOCES or Big City service areas and would be single agency or a combination of agencies. The regional multi-type projects were to be based on one of the nine 3 R's (Reference and Research Library Resources System) systems. Each 3 R's system has within its boundaries, and as component members of the system, two or more public library systems. A public library system generally serves one or more counties and for the most part the system includes an entire county. There are 22 public library systems that are recognized for State-aid payments. Of these 22 systems, Pioneer Library System is a federation of five individually chartered systems. By contract, the Monroe County Library System performs central processing and inter-library loan services for Livingston County Library System, Ontario Cooperative Library System, Wayne County Library System, and Wyoming County Library. The Chemung-Southern Tier Library System was formed by contract between the Steele Memorial Library of Chemung County and the Southern Tier Library System. Only one county is split between two systems - Ulster which is divided between the Ramapo Catskill Library System and the Mid-Hudson Library System. Contrast this organization with BOCES where you find parts of one county in many BOCES.

The original projects were chosen by competitive applications. All of the 3 R's applied and the two applications chosen were Rochester and METRO. The Rochester project used the acronym RARE (Rochester Area Resource Exchange). Components were the Rochester 3 R's, the Pioneer Library System, and four school library systems: Monroe I, Monroe II, Livingston-Steuben-Wyoming BOCES, and the Rochester City School District. METRO consisted of the Metro 3 R's, Brooklyn Public Library, The New York Public Library, Queens Borough Public Library, the Westchester Library System, and three school library systems: New York City School District, Yonkers City School District, and the Putnam-Northern Westchester BOCES.

In addition to these 2 regional pilot projects, there were 5 independent school library systems: four BOCES - Albany-Schoharie-Schenectady, Broome-Delaware, Delaware-Chenango, Oswego, and the Syracuse City School District. While the pilots were only supposed to run for three years, it was five years before they were made permanent by Chapter 348 of the Laws of 1984 which Governor Cuomo signed in July 1984. At this time the law no longer made provision for multi-type library system funding. It provided that the existing 12 school library systems would be permanently funded and provided for the establishment of the remaining 36 eligible school library systems - the Buffalo City School District and the other 35 BOCES. Chapter 348 also increased funding for the 3 R's (Reference and Research Library Resources Systems) and for the public library systems and central library development aid.

As of 30 June 1984 these 12 school library systems served 427,150 pupils in 117 public school districts and 19,301 nonpublic pupils in 57 schools.

During the 5 years of operation as pilot projects interlibrary loan increased steadily from 12,622 in 1979-80 to 50,353 in 1983-84. In each of these years most of the interlibrary loan requests were filled by school libraries. Union catalogs of monographic holdings of school library collections went from 100,948 items entered into the data base in 1979-80 to a total of 643,929 holdings listed as available for sharing in 1983-84.

Current Status

System Requirements

Chapter 348 made several significant changes. First and most important, there no longer were pilot projects wondering each year if their funding would be extended or terminated on 1 July, so that long range planning was an actual need, not a paper exercise.

The school library systems are governed by Section 90.18 of the Commissioner's Regulations which went into effect 26 September 1984. These regulations meant changes that effected all 48 school library systems. Every system had to have a full-time certified school library media specialist as coordinator. (In the pilots two systems had shared a coordinator.) Every coordinator also had to hold a certificate for School Administrator and Supervisor or to get this certification by 1 July 1989. None of the existing coordinators had an SAS and only two of the new coordinators had it at the time they were hired. A school library system coordinator also was to have had three years experience as a school library media specialist in a school building or at the district level. Six school library systems were given waivers because they could not find qualified candidates. Of these six, one had been hired before Commissioner's Regulation 90.18 went into effect. The remaining five had backgrounds in technological applications and other library experience that was considered to meet the demands that the coordinator would face in developing a school library system.

Plan of Service

Another new requirement was that every school library system had to submit an approvable five-year plan of service that covered 15 specific points. This plan of service would show how many districts and nonpublic schools were participating, and within the district how many buildings, how many pupils, the grades served, size of the library collection, and the staffing. All of these schools also had to meet Commissioner's Regulations 90.1 and 90.2 which set minimum requirements for building level programs. The school library system had to have a broadly representative advisory council with procedures for annual election or appointment of one-third of the seats on the council. The third requirement of the plan of service was the establishment of a standardized machine readable catalog to locate library resources. Fourth were procedures for accepting, verifying and responding to the requests for interlibrary loan and a way to deliver this service. In addition to the full-time certified coordinator, every system had to have a full-time support person for each coordinator. (New York City

or any system with an enrollment of 200,000 students or more also had to employ additional professional and support staff in the ratio of one-half time person for each additional 100,000 students.) The plan had to show how the school library system would cooperate with school and other types of systems, and specifically to which of the nine 3 R's systems the school library system would submit a membership application. Area public library and 3 R's systems had to be represented on the school library system council. The school library system had to state the means the system would take to assure compatibility in its computerized and technical operations with those of other library systems of the State in accordance with Commissioner's Regulations 90.19.

The plan also required the identification of special clients and how their needs would be met, along with ways to assess continuing education needs of librarians and develop appropriate activities to meet those needs.

They had to have a plan on how and when they would go about initiating cooperative collection development and procedures for promoting awareness of special resources and services among participants. With this would be procedures for encouraging communication among members and participants (a district is a member, a building is a participant). There had to be procedures for annual evaluation of programs and services, an annual report to members and other appropriate groups, and how these evaluations and reports will be used to plan future programs and services. They were also to review annually the appropriateness of combining or cooperating with adjacent school library systems to provide more effective and efficient delivery of services. (The Cortland-Madison BOCES and the Onondaga-Madison BOCES will merge 1 July 1986 so those two system will be one. The Clinton-Essex and Franklin-Essex systems do many activities either cooperatively or by contract, including many library activities they did before they were established as separate school library systems, under the acronym of CHAIN [Champlain-Adirondack Interlibrary Network]).

The final requirement was a description of responsibilities of district liaisons. Each district must provide a certified library media specialist to represent the district in meetings with the system coordinator. This liaison is the person to communicate system policies and procedures to their district, and to implement system procedures such as interlibrary loan. The coordinator meets periodically with all of the liaisons.

Coordinator

The coordinator is seen by SED as an administrative position within the structure of the BOCES or City that governs their school library system. The coordinator is responsible for creating, establishing, developing, implementing and evaluating all of the services and programs, preparing the budget and annual report of the school library system, being an advisor to member districts on program development and improvement, as well as serving as the system's liaison to the State Education Department, especially the Bureau of School Library Media Programs and the Division of Library Development which share the program responsibility for school library systems.

Member Requirements

Membership requirements were kept to a minimum to encourage participation of school districts and nonpublic schools. All schools that meet these requirements are eligible to apply for membership: designation by the district of a certified school librarian to be the liaison to the system who will implement the procedures to be followed to meet system requirements for the data collection for union lists, cooperative collection development, interlibrary loan, etc. City school districts would have more than one liaison reflecting internal organization patterns of that particular city.

The participating district/building must permit the interlibrary loan of books and library resources, except for materials not otherwise loaned by such member and for access to shelflists for union list development.

Each library must meet minimum staffing and collection size in accordance with the requirement for that enrollment.

Finally, within one year of becoming a member of a school library system, each school district and nonpublic school must submit a plan to the system that shows how district and building library resources and programs meet the needs of the students and teachers of that particular building/district and describe ways in which it proposes to make effective use of the school library system.

A member also agrees to maintain its local expenditure for school library materials on a per capita basis effective 1986-87 and thereafter.

System Operations

All 48 school library systems are in operation. The last coordinator (Rockland BOCES) will start 17 March. The first resignation (Suffolk #1) has come in effective 1 April. One problem is that there is a shortage of librarians. Add to this, the fact that experienced librarians can work in a district for more money and a much shorter work period. The systems are limited in what they can pay as they operate totally under State aid. The 1985-86 total State aid for most systems is \$65,000 (and 11 of the pilots have been at that level for three or more years), with Nassau and Suffolk #2 each having an enrollment that raised them to \$90,000 and New York City received \$700,000. Systems serving under 100,000 get \$65,000; 100,000-200,000 get \$90,000; 200,000-500,000 = \$125,000; over 500,000 = \$700,000. (Coordinator who is leaving will be a district coordinator with a \$12,000 increase in pay.)

Management

School library system aid is submitted through SED as CE #1 the library omnibus bill that covers State aid for all types of library programs. The current funding for school library systems is \$3,840,000. The request for 1986-87 is for \$5,209,135. It would consist of a base grant using same population spreads (\$72,000, \$82,000, \$110,000, \$700,000) but it would add additional factors: per district \$550, per square mile \$2.00, per student \$.19. The City systems do not like this as they are only one district. They wanted a building factor. Systems serving nonpublic schools also wanted a building factor

and not just \$.19 a pupil. The Regents proposal has been introduced by Senator Farley as S7930. It has not yet been introduced in the Assembly. Edward Sullivan will introduce it, probably this week, but the indications are that he will introduce his bill with different amounts for a total bill that is about \$7 million less than the Senate/SED request. Both bills would include appropriations for two years. The Senate/SED bill would provide second year increases.

SED Role

The Bureau of School Library Media Programs is the supervisory unit for the school library program in the State's public and nonpublic schools. For years school librarians had been totally isolated while they watched other types of library systems being developed. The public library systems were developed in the 1950's, followed in the late 60's by the 3 R's systems, thus bringing large numbers of librarians together for mutual aid and support. Since no one library can acquire everything its clientele might want, sharing resources made more resources available, but only to users of public, academic and special libraries. These systems had been developed through the Division of Library Development, which is the supervisory unit for these types of libraries. Teachers and students who wanted to borrow items that weren't in their school library did without or had to go to the library that might have the item they wanted.

It was the late 70's before the concept of school library systems really began to gather support. Since the Bureau of School Library Media Programs was the direct contact with school libraries and since these school libraries should be linked with other libraries in other systems which were supervised by the Division of Library Development, it was logical that in view of the long-standing cooperation between these two units, the school library system development should be a cooperative effort of the two units also. Since the two units were under different Deputy and Assistant Commissioners, there had to be cooperation at all levels.

From the beginning it was agreed that the Bureau of School Library Media Programs should be the liaison or consultant to the school library systems and would work with their colleagues who were the consultants to the other library systems to insure compatible regional development. Thus when the school library systems were first started in 1978-79, staff of the Bureau of School Library Media Programs were involved in the planning and were the direct liaisons to the school library systems. In the two multi-type library systems, there was a liaison from both BSLMP and DLD. Ethel Severinghaus and Patricia Mallon worked with RARE, while Bea Griggs and Dorothy Smith had METRO. Theresa Case was the liaison to Delaware-Chenango, Ann Lownes had Broome-Delaware, Ben Meffert had Oswego, and I had Syracuse and Albany-Schoharie-Schenectady. Since I was also the school liaison to DLD I handled all of the paperwork relating to all school library systems over there until July 1985. As part of the funding with the school library systems bill, DLD was authorized an associate position to coordinate the school library systems. This position was filled on 2 May 1985 by Joseph Mattie.

When Ben Meffert retired in May of 1983, and was not replaced, I took over Oswego in addition to my existing systems. Staff changes in 1985 required additional changes in assignments. Ann Lownes, our elementary curriculum specialist, died in February after almost a year's illness. Bea Griggs sudden death in April meant additional changes, capped by Ethel Severinghaus' retirement in July and Theresa Case's retirement in August. Both of these retirements had been submitted in January 1985. Frances Roscello was hired as an Associate on a provisional appointment in August. Since that meant that there were two people to handle 48 school library systems (36 of them brand new) and all of the other activities of the Bureau including the development of a 7-12 library media skills curriculum/syllabus (as a side note: when the first 12 systems were started in 1978-79 there were 6½ professionals in addition to the Bureau Chief to handle the work of the office), it was impossible to do the work with only two people so we temporarily borrowed the services of Joe Mattie to serve as liaison to the school library systems in the Western region and the Rochester region. Fran Roscello has Central, Northern, South Central, and Capital regions, while I have Southeastern, Metro, and Long Island.

Not only were we short of staff to work with these systems, but we were hampered by tight travel funds. The entire travel budget for all Bureau operations consisted of \$1000 State and \$4000 from ECIA 2. Joe Mattie's travel budget just for school library system work was at least \$10,000. Therefore whenever possible we teamed with him since he was to get acquainted with all 48 school library systems and not just the ones in the two regions that he volunteered to take until we got additional staffing, which at this point looks as if it may be the middle of July 1986.

Management of the systems is done with individual systems handled by the assigned liaison. Newsletters, budget approvals, appointment approvals, and waivers if needed, are done jointly by Roberta Cade, Director, Division of Library Development and myself. Policy decisions, discussion of problems and possible solutions are discussed at a monthly management team meeting consisting of Joseph Shubert, Roberta Cade, Fran Roscello, Joe Mattie and myself.

System Decisions

System decisions were required this year on two matters: submission of the format of the form they were going to provide to their member libraries to develop the member plan, and what bibliographic utility they were going to use to develop their data base. Member plan formats have been received from all but 6 systems. Bibliographic utility decisions have been made by all but 10 systems. Bro-Dart has been selected by 17, OCLC by 8, Marcive by 6, Bibliofile by 4 with one each selecting MILCS, Mid-York, and Utlas. They have until April to decide.

Meetings

We held a 3 day planning conference with a team of 3 from each of the proposed 48 systems in January 1985 to get them started and to be aware of what we expected of the systems. We met with the few coordinators who had been appointed by the May 1985 School Library Media Section/New York Library

Association Conference, we held a one day meeting for all coordinators in September, we met with all of them at the New York Library Association Conference in December. We have also met with all of them at a separate meeting they called in October and with the governing board of the School Library System Association in November and December. We will hold a 3 day meeting with teams of three from each system (the coordinator, council chair, and a member librarian) 19-21 March at the Thruway House in Albany.

We met informally with about one-half of them when they were in Albany 24-25 February for the 6th annual Learning Technologies Fair. Most of them will be in town on 11 March when NYLA holds its annual Visit Your Legislator Day.

We try to be in touch with our systems by phone at least once a month. We are in touch with many of them weekly or biweekly.

Attachments: Chapter 787 Laws of 1978
Chapter 348 Laws of 1984
Commissioner's Regulations 90.1 and 90.2
Commissioner's Regulations 90.18 and 90.19
Lasting Benefits for Libraries
Job Description for School Library System Coordinator - DLD
School Library System Memos 1-5
SED/S7390 Library Omnibus Bill 1986